awareness campaign through electronic and print media to educate potential migrants about the risks of illegal migration. The regulatory mechanism is being made transparent to address the problem. The Ministry is also examing a proposal to establish an Overseas Workers' Welfare Fund which *inter-alia* will seek to provide on site, off site and return and resettlement services.

(b) and (c) As per the information received from HCI, Kuala Lumpur, their Minister of Home Affairs, has clarified that the Government of Malaysia has not frozen the recruitment of workers from India. He also mentioned that there is no move to limit the intake of workers from India though Malaysia was trying to reduce the number of foreign workers. Government of Malaysia would not approve work permit for any foreign worker who has worked in the country for five years or more. Further, Malaysian Government has not specified, any number that may be sent back by the end of 2009.

Amendment in Emigration Act

2728. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to amend the Emigration Act to protect the interests of 50 lakh overseas Indian workers, most of them are semi-skilled and from poor rural backgrounds, and therefore, prone to exploitation;

(b) if so, the details of the amendments that have been finalized in consultation with the missions; and

(c) whether Government has set up a Council for Promotion of Overseas Employment to function as a think-tank for conducting international labour market research and devising strategies for enabling Indian workers to avail themselves of job opportunities abroad?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The amendments are in the process of being finalized.

(c) The Government proposes to set up a "Council for Promotion of Overseas Employment" as a society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. The proposed Council will function as a strategic Think Tank' and respond to the changes in the international labour market on a real time basis to identify future overseas employment opportunities, the emerging labour supply gaps, country/sector specific skill requirements, make realistic projections and plans for overseas deployment of workers, disseminate relevant information to potential emigrants and implement a sustained skill upgradation programme to match the market requirement. Cabinet has approved the setting up of the Council.

Victims of human trafficking

2729. MS. SUSHILATIRIYA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is **a** fact that Indian workers in United States have become victims of human trafficking;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps Government has taken for the safety of these workers?